



# SPAIN GOLF GUIDE



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## Spain Golf

The Costa del Sol on the South West coast of Spain has been a premier European destination for golf for many years. Having staged the 1997 Ryder Cup at Valderrama it is now known world-wide. The climate is ideal for year-round golf and there are more quality courses than any other part of Europe. Spain is a large country but fortunately for golfers, many of the best courses are closely grouped on the coast.

For a snowbound, frustrated golfer, desperate to play in the sunshine, the Costa del Golf is proving irresistible. Golf course owners are re-investing in their courses to improve their quality still further and there are no longer any weak links, each course offering its own kind of challenge on perfect fairways and greens.

There are very few places in the world that can match the Costa del Sol as a destination for golf tourism.

## Spain Golf Vacations

Golf in Spain with SGH Golf the Spanish experts. Spain is world famous for Spanish links courses such as: Valderrama, La Cala Norte, La Cala Sur, Los Naranjos, Sotogrande, San Roque, El Paraiso, Montemayor, Los Olivos, Los Lagos, Alcaidesa, Santa Maria, La Quinta, Torrequebrada and many, many more.

SGH Golf can provide you with a wide variety of Spanish golf vacation packages using small, friendly hotels, to full service world-class hotels along with your choice of some of the finest links golf courses in the Costa Del Sol. The above links are some of the sample itineraries on the trips we can offer you. SGH Golf customizes all of our tours and hope we can make your next golf holiday one you will always remember.

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# Spain Golf Courses

## Spain Golf Courses

### **Valderrama** (Handicap **M:24 W:32**)

Home to the Volvo Masters (1988-96), the Ryder Cup (1997) and the World Golf Championships (1999-2000), Valderrama surpasses its reputation as number 1 in Europe. Designed by Robert Trent Jones and lovingly attended by owner Jaime Ortiz Patino, this is one of the continent's toughest challenges. The 4th hole a par 5 of spectacular beauty ends on a raised green, next to a cascade of water on its way to the greenside lake. The famous par five 17th features a green with bunkers behind and slopes forwards to an emerald lake is the favorite of spectators and the hatred of championship players.



### **La Cala North & South** (Handicap **M:28 W:36**)

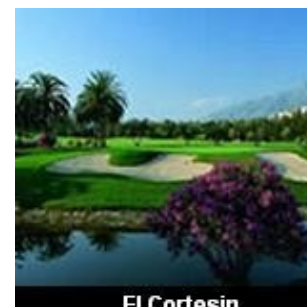
Two fine 18 hole courses: La Cala Norte and La Cala Sur are complemented superbly by an elegant and comfortably appointed colonial styled clubhouse. It also boasts a David Leadbetter Golf Academy that includes six-hole par three "executive" course.

### **Alcaidesa Links** (Handicap **M:28 W:36**)

Alcaidesa Links Golf Club which opened in 1992, is an experience that cannot be found anywhere else in Spain; it is the first true links course in the country. Located to the west of San Roque, in an area rich with enthusiastic golfers the course has recently undergone an extensive program of remodeling; fairways have been improved and widened. This is a 'must experience.'

### **El Cortesin**

The 18 holes golf course is designed by Cabell Robinson. Unlike most of the existing courses in the Costa del Sol area, houses do not interfere with the game. This also means that there is a lot of room for the holes which are not cramped by buildings, so the player can enjoy his golf in a natural environment. The length of the course reaches nearly 7 km from the white tees, becoming one of the largest courses in Europe, with a total par of 72.



### **La Quinta** (Handicap **M:26 W:34**)

La Quinta has three courses: San Pedro, Ronda and Guadaiza. Located on the valley of Marbella Golf, it is one of the busiest in Spain. The most characteristic of the course is that distances are not too long, but some difficulties appear, such as bunkers, dangerous slopes, rivers, trees and lakes. Located on an uneven ground, at some fairways, it forces one to shoot to the pin in order to avoid the long putts. It can be considered one of the most technical courses of the area.

### **Los Naranjos** (Handicap **M:27 W:35**)

As implied by its name, Los Naranjos is set within a series of orange groves. Designed by Robert Trent Jones, the creator of Valderrama, this is one of Spain's finest courses, offering all golfers the enviable opportunity to enjoy the facilities of a top-class venue. Its two nine-hole courses each offer individual challenges, as the outward nine lies over hilly countryside, whilst the returning holes meander through flat olive groves.

### **San Roque** (Handicap **M:28 W:36**)

Inspired by former Ryder Cup captain, Tony Jacklin, and devised by architect Dave Thomas, this course was opened in 1990. Designed as two nines to provide a varied and exciting challenge, San Roque offers sufficient complexity to test the abilities of even the most proficient golfer. Amid breathtaking scenery, the course winds its way through a multitude of different landscapes, from valleys of cork oaks and bubbling streams to open meadowland.



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**Sotogrande** (Handicap **M:25 W:30**)

The grandfather of clubs in Andalusia, Sotogrande only improves with age. No wrinkles are to be found on this immaculate course. Sotogrande opened in 1964 and is still voted amongst the top ten courses in Europe. It has well established vegetation with pine, cork oaks, eucalyptus and palm trees. Water hazards play an important role here, affecting holes 12, 13 and 14 and 16, 17 and 18.



**Torrequibrada** (Handicap **M:27 W:35**)

If tortuous Torrequibrada has one thing going for it one would have to choose the fabulous sea views. It has plenty of trees and bushes, and six of its holes are affected by water and numerous strategically placed bunkers. The hole 16th is a short par 4 dogleg to the right, with a downhill second shot toward a raised green where the pin is almost invisible. Designed by that son of nature Pepe Gancedo, "Why move earth when a golf hole should follow the natural contours", Torrequibrada opened in 1976 and has, since then, played host to the Spanish Open and a whole string of top line tournaments.



**Almenara** (Handicap **M: 28 W: 34**)

Set around lakes and Cork Oak trees. Greens already accepted as being of tournament quality. A future classic course. Almenara Golf Club, located between Valderrama and San Roque courses. Opened in the Spring of 1999, built over very hilly terrain, this design by Dave Thomas adds even more difficulties with narrow fairways and typical high lipped fairway bunkers, which catch anything hit off target. This is quite a wide course and what with the danger lurking alongside or across the fairways you are often better off leaving the driver in the bag. A well built course where maintenance is good.

**La Reserva**

Accessed by two gated entrances, La Reserva is a discrete, secure, and relaxing retreat, sensitively developed with modern and environmentally friendly infrastructure and surrounded by a beautiful 18-hole design by Cabell Robinson. At the foot of "Sierra de Almenara", La Reserva de Sotogrande consists of parcels of land, which vary in size between 2.500 and 4.000 square metres. The majority are on the frontline of the golf course. Superbly located to enjoy the world of Golf. Exclusive 2,3 and 4 bed roomed houses situated beside Casa Club and the golf course Golf de la Reserva. With its wonderful natural surroundings of more than 4,500 acres of beautiful Andalusian countryside and mountains, and just 25 minutes away from Marbella, Sotogrande offers you the opportunity to enjoy its unique life and style. Sotogrande has all the necessary services to make life easy for homeowners and visitors.

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# Spain Hotels

## **Kempinski Hotel & Resort** 🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆

The Kempinski, Estepona, is only 50 minutes drive from Malaga airport and 10 minutes drive from Marbella and Puerto Banus. The architecture of the hotel itself is a compliment to Morrish and Andalusian styles; its interior and painting having been designed by a local artist classically highlights tradition with beautiful warm rustic colors. Facilities within the hotel are abundant: different restaurants to choose from, small shops, three indoor pools (one heated), and a health and beauty centre second to none in the region – to list but a few! Rooms are spacious with view of pool and/or sea.



## **The Westin La Quinta Hotel** 🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆

The good life is a serious pursuit on the Costa del Sol, where beaches line the Mediterranean and emerald golf courses beckon. The Westin La Quinta Golf Resort is Marbella's newest gem, a paradise in the famed Valley of Golf with a golf academy and 27 championship holes. Every room at The Westin La Quinta opens to a private balcony, ideal for enjoying fairway views and Europe's warmest winter temperatures. Andalusian culture and the shopping and nightlife of Puerto Banús are within minutes of the tranquil resort, and the hotel's meeting rooms and rooftop garden accommodate small gatherings in elegant style.

## **Puente Romano Hotel** 🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆

Located on Marbella Beach, the international playground of Europe, Puente Romano offers the utmost in luxury. Nestled between the mountains and the sea, surrounded by tropical gardens of rare beauty, lakes and waterfalls. All guest rooms have terraces, each decorated by Europe's foremost designers.



## **La Cala Hotel & Resort** 🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆

In the spectacular hillside of the Mijas Costa is La Cala Resort with its 5 star hotel and 2 magnificent 18-hole golf courses. This exquisite Andalusian building is set in peaceful surroundings and breathtaking scenery. It offers two high quality restaurants, overlooking the golf courses with national and international cuisine. Rooms are spacious all with own balcony.

## **Almenara Hotel & Resort** 🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆

Situated near four of Europe's finest golf courses, and skirted by its own 18-hole course, the Almenara Hotel & Resort is in an ideal setting with all the facilities you require. Health & beauty Spa, and a variety of venues to eat, with spectacular views, over the course and surrounding countryside. Rooms are comfortable with all facilities.

## **San Roque Club** 🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆

This magnificent mansion, former home of the Domecq sherry dynasty, has now been converted into a beautifully designed hotel, set among the cobbled courtyards and Moorish arcades and pools. Manicured paths lead to the hacienda-style bungalows and to the magnificent lagoon pool. The property is nestled in the heart of one of Spain's finest nature reserves. There are 100 guest



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rooms, of which 50 are suite(s), deluxe and superior, all overlooking either the pool or the gardens. Hotel also offers heated lagoon pool, 18-hole championship golf course and tennis courts.

**El Fuerte Hotel, Marbella** ★★★★★

Hotel El Fuerte is in a very quiet area, right on the beach. There are 263 comfortable rooms with balcony with views of the sea or the mountains, all with private bath, satellite TV, mini-bar, safety box and telephone. Amenities include parking, bar, coffee-shop, 2 restaurants, swimming pools (one indoors heated), garden, terrace, tennis court, mini-golf, squash, sauna and gym, etc.



**Pyr Apartments** ★★★

Located in Puerto Banús less than a mile from Marbella, Hotel PYR is split into apartments, all with terraces and ideal facilities for those who wish to avail of a self-catering holiday. These luxurious apartments are within walking distance of the beach, the longest on the Costa del Sol, and in the centre of the finest golf courses on the in the region. The complex comprises 319 large and bright studios and apartments with terrace, complete bathroom, fully equipped kitchen, telephone, satellite television, central air-conditioning (cooling and heating), thermal and acoustic insulation. The hotel is located close to a wide selection of designer shops, great restaurants and lively entertainment.



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# Recommended Sightseeing

## **Marbella**

Marbella enjoys beautiful landscape providing the backdrop to the many golf courses located in the area and which are famous the world over. Places of interest to visit in Marbella are: Bonsai Museum, Museum of Contemporary Engravings, Old Town, Orange Square, Parque dal Constitution, City Walls, Seafont Promenade, El Fuerte Beach, Marbella Mosque.



## **Ronda**

A beautiful drive and only one hour from Marbella through the impressive Serrania de Ronda, where lots of wildlife species and plants can be found. The city is divided into three quarters. The oldest one has the structure of a Moorish town and is situated on a point west and north protected by a gorge, which is 1km long and 100m deep, dug by the river Guadalquivir. The 'San Francisco' quarter (Saint Francis), in the south, outside the old city precinct, is more rural. From there, the Christian troops laid siege to the city in the 15th century. The 'Mercadillo' quarter (street market), in the north of the city, on the other side of the gorge, began to develop in the 16th century, but it underwent its largest expansion in the 18th and 19th centuries. Its streets meet in right angles. It is the shopping part of the city with pedestrian streets. The old and the new and one of the oldest bull rings in Spain. There's just a little bit of magic about Ronda and something for everyone to see!



## **Estepona**

Estepona is one of the few coastal towns that has succeeded in maintaining its pueblo charm and character, despite the onslaught of tourism. Notwithstanding, all the tourist facilities are here, including hotels, restaurants, leisure and cultural activities, and shops. The flip side is that the numerous street cafes and tapas bars still serve traditional Spanish delicacies and the steep, cobbled, narrow streets seem more suited to horses than cars. You'll also find unusual shops and bodegas in Estepona, where you'd least expect them, all very inviting, very friendly - and very cheap!

## **Malaga**

The coast of Province of Malaga has a wonderful climate, short mild winters, hospitable towns people, and glorious landscapes. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, travelers from all over the world have chosen to stay here, baptizing it with a name that is recognized the world over: the Costa del Sol.



## **Fuengirola**

The city of Fuengirola is in the middle of the Costa del Sol. Its seafont is seven kilometers of fine sands and excellent services. The Moorish castle of Sobail, located on a promontory overlooking the sea, offers a magnificent view of the city and the coast. Fuengirola's maritime and fishing tradition lives on in one of the best marinas on the Mediterranean and in the superlative gastronomy.

## **Gibraltar**

Enjoy a nice drive along the coastal road until you reach La Linea de las Concepcion, the last Spanish town before the border of Gibraltar. Some of the most interesting sites and views of Gibraltar are Europa Point, Sandy Bay, the Apes Den, and the St. Michael's Caves with its magnificent stalagmites and stalactites which date back to before Christ. You will also come across the Governor's Palace, commonly known as the "Convent", and Trafalgar Cemetery where many who fought in the Battle of Trafalgar are buried.

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### **Sevilla**

From Marbella, the drive to Sevilla is approximately 2 hours through very scenic and fascinating countryside along the way. Seville is the Andalusian capital and the third largest Spanish city. Bathed by the Guadalquivir River, Seville has a strong identity all its own, while its popular quarters, such as Santa Cruz, are as interesting as its many monuments and old buildings.

### **Puerto Banus**

Possibly the ultimate in coastal charisma! Puerto Banus is located just west of Marbella before you reach the small town of San Pedro de Alcantera. This is the place to be pampered yacht-side and ogle at those fabulous luxury yachts while sipping a drink at one of the many open air restaurants and bars. The setting is close to ideal with its impressive mountain backdrop and ocean views. The beach adjacent to Puerto Banus holds a European "blue flag", a distinction as one of the best beaches.



### **Mijas**

Mijas combines ocean and mountain. Near its beaches, there are residential areas and tourist services. As we climb the sunny hillside, the sea comes into view. The rugged beauty of Mijas captivates anyone who decides to ascend its steep streets on the back of a donkey-taxi.

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# Spain Sample Itinerary

## Spain Value Golf Tour Itinerary...

### Day 1:

Your vacation of a lifetime starts with an overnight flight to Malaga, Spain.

### Day 2:

Upon your arrival in Spain, you will be met by a SGH Golf representative who will assist you with your luggage and provide helpful hints on traveling and driving around the coast. After being shown to your rental vehicle, you will drive south along the coast to Marbella and the Pyr Hotel which will be your home for the next seven days.



### Day 3:

This morning after breakfast, golf will be arranged at Sotogrande Golf Course. Sotogrande is located in a perfectly natural surrounding for golf all through the year. Rated in the top 5 in Europe.

### Day 4:

Today after breakfast, you will play San Roque. Designed as two nines to provide a varied and exciting challenge, San Roque offers sufficient complexity to test the abilities of even the most proficient golfer.



### Day 5:

Golf today will be arranged at Valderrama Golf Club. Valderrama is ranked as Europe's Number 1 course and has been for several years. It also plays host to many European tournaments.



### Day 6:

Today after breakfast, you will be playing La Reserva. Accessed by two gated entrances, La Reserva is a discrete, secure, and relaxing retreat, sensitively developed with modern and environmentally friendly infrastructure and surrounded by a beautiful 18-hole design by Cabell Robinson.

### Day 7:

This morning after breakfast, golf will be arranged at El Cortesin. The 18 holes golf course is designed by Cabell Robinson. Unlike most of the existing courses in the Costa del Sol area, houses do not interfere with the game.

### Day 8:

Today after breakfast, golf will be arranged at Almenara Golf Club. Located between Valderrama and San Roque, Almenara opened in the Spring of 1999, and is built over very hilly terrain.

### Day 9:

Depart for home or continue to Portugal or one of our other destinations.

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## Spain Value Golf Tour Cost...

All prices are per person, double occupancy, land cost only.

### Prices Start At:

**\$2415.00 per golfer and \$1413.00 per non golfer.**

All golf is subject to availability. Valderrama requires to be booked well in advance. Rates vary depending on season.

### Cost Includes:

- Meet and greet at Malaga Airport.
- Full breakfast each day.
- 7 nights accommodation, double occupancy at hotel indicated.
- Daily maid and linen service.
- All transportation provided by rental car, unlimited mileage, collision damage waiver (CDW) and tax. (gas is extra)
- Green fees and starting times for one round at each of the following courses: Sotogrande, San Roque, Valderrama, La Reserva, El Cortesin, and Almenara.
- All service charges on hotel accommodation, and all local taxes.
- SGH Golf luggage tags and travel documents.
- Assistance of our Spain office to arrange extra golf and sightseeing trips of all description.

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# Spain Sample Itinerary

## Spain Luxury Golf Tour Itinerary...

The following vacation is designed for those travellers seeking the finest service and accommodations that can only be found at Spain's premier golf hotels. The following itinerary is only one sample of the many variations we can offer.

### Day 1:

Your vacation of a lifetime starts with an overnight flight to Malaga, Spain.

### Day 2:

Upon your arrival in Spain, you will be met by a SGH Golf representative who will assist you with your luggage and provide helpful hints on traveling and driving around the coast. After being shown to your rental vehicle, you will drive to Estepona and the Kempinski Hotel & Resort which will be your home for the next 7 days.



### Day 3:

This morning, after breakfast, golf will be arranged at Sotogrande Golf Course. Sotogrande is located in a perfectly natural surrounding for golf all through the year. Rated in the top 5 in Europe.

### Day 4:

Today, you will play San Roque. Designed as two nines to provide a varied and exciting challenge, San Roque offers sufficient complexity to test the abilities of even the most proficient golfer.



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### Day 7:

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### Day 8:

Today golf will be arranged at Almenara. Located between Valderrama and San Roque, Almenara opened in the Spring of 1999, and is built over very hilly terrain.

### Day 9:

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## Spain Luxury Golf Tour Cost...

All prices are per person, double occupancy, land cost only.

### Prices Start At:

**\$2965.00 per golfer and \$1963.00 per non golfer.**

All golf is subject to availability. Valderrama requires to be booked well in advance. Rates vary depending on season.

### Cost Includes:

- Meet and greet at Malaga Airport.
- Full breakfast each day.
- 7 nights accommodation, double occupancy at hotel indicated.
- All transportation provided by rental car, unlimited mileage, collision damage waiver (CDW) and tax. (gas is extra)
- Green fees and starting times for one round at each of the following courses: Sotogrande, San Roque, Valderrama, La Reserva, El Cortesin, and Almenara.
- All service charges on hotel accommodation, and all local taxes.
- SGH Golf luggage tags and travel documents.
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# SPAIN HELPFUL HINTS

***FOR YOUR TRIP***

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# PLANNING AHEAD

## **Visas and Passports**

All U.S. Citizens traveling in Europe must have a valid passport *good for the duration of their visit*. If you do not have a passport, apply for one at your local passport office, clerk of the federal state court, or designated post office. Allow several weeks for the government to process your application. *You do not need a visa for Spain and Portugal.*

Your passport will be inspected in your home city airport and again in Europe upon your arrival.

As a safety measure, we would suggest that you photocopy the front pages of your passport, your traveler's check agreement (with check numbers), airline tickets and everything you will be carrying in your wallet. Leave one copy at home and carry one copy separate from your passport. This will be of immense help to you if your documents are lost or stolen. It is also a good idea to have two extra copies of your passport pictures made for use in case your passport must be replaced because of loss.

# GOLF EQUIPMENT

## **Golf Bag**

Take a small Sunday bag in case you have to carry or pull your own bag. We would also recommend you do not leave your golf bag unattended at any time, either at the golf course or in your car, as even in Spain and Portugal things can be stolen.

## **Caddies**

Caddies are a rare commodity in Spain, therefore it is more likely to have a trolley, if buggies are not available. Where a caddy has been reserved, they are independent from the course and are paid directly. The fee ranges from 30.00€ to 40.00€ euros, the amount of tip is at your discretion. Pull trolleys are approximately 4.00€ to 5.00€ for an electric one.

## **Golf Balls**

Bring enough for the trip, unless money is no object, as you will pay premium for golf balls in Spain and Portugal.

## **Pencils & Wooden Tees**

Courses overseas do not provide pencils, so bring 3 or 4 of your own. The tees in Europe are much shorter than ours, and sometimes plastic, so bring your own.

## **Band-Aids & Sun Block**

You should also bring Band-Aids for blisters and sun block to prevent an uncomfortable burn.

## **Towel**

Ball washers are very uncommon overseas, so bring a small towel for your clubs and golf balls.

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### **Rain Suit and Umbrella**

Although you will be traveling during the dry season, there is always the possibility of rain. The umbrella can also come in handy in case of hot sun.

### **Golf Shoes**

Two pairs should be plenty. Make sure they are well broken in before you travel. New shoes that cause blisters could be a disaster, as you are walking each day. **Soft spikes** are used at all courses.

## **WHAT TO TAKE**

Two words say it best .... **TRAVEL LIGHT**. You will enjoy your vacation more with a suitcase which isn't too heavy.

### **Travel Documents**

Don't forget to take your **AIRLINE TICKETS AND PASSPORT!!** Always be sure to check your airline tickets as soon as you receive them to be sure that they are accurate and complete. **DO NOT** pack your airline tickets or passport in your suitcase and **DO NOT** carry your airline tickets around with you. It is a good idea to use the hotel safe for valuables, there will be a safe in your room for which some hotels will charge a small fee.

### **Money**

We suggest that you do not take large amounts of cash, but instead take a widely recognized brand of traveler's cheques and a well known credit card. Be sure to make a list of your credit card and cheque numbers and keep it in a place separate from your wallet, purse or passport.

### **Clothing**

Pack lightly, since it will simplify your travel. Laundry and dry cleaning is very expensive, so drip dry clothes might come in handy.

Acceptable attire for golf courses in Europe is equivalent to many places in the US. T-shirts must have collar and sleeves, golf shoes should have SOFT SPIKES and Bermuda shorts are allowed. Strictly no denim.

### **Packing Suggestions**

For the men: Sports Coat (Jackets can be required for dinner in some hotels, and jackets are required in the clubhouse at Valderrama). Two or three pairs of slacks, light weight sports jacket, two sweaters – one for golf and one multipurpose, dark shoes and a pair of walking shoes, eight golf shirts (unless you want to do laundry), dress shirts and ties.

For the ladies: dress code for dinner at hotels can be described as smart. Slacks are acceptable attire. Walking shoes are essential, as is a light weight raincoat or jacket (just in case!).

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### **Appliance Converters**

You should ensure that all electrical appliances, such as shavers and hairdryers, can be used on European voltage, which is 115 or 220. Some hotels will supply adapters upon request, although we recommend that you carry one.

### **Hotel Extras**

Try to pay your extras (laundry, bar, bill etc) the evening before departure. You will have much more time to check your bill. Some hotels can't accommodate this, but try to do it wherever you can.

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### **Baggage Allowance**

Your international baggage allowance is two pieces checked, of which a golf bag counts as one, plus one carry-on. These pieces should not exceed 107 linear inches, ie. length plus height, and should, if possible, be restricted to less than 44 lbs per bag. The airlines require that your full name and address is on the outside of your bag. It is also a good idea to put your name and address somewhere on the inside of your bag.

We suggest you bring a golf bag, one suitcase and one carry-on flight bag. Use your flight bag for toiletries and last minute articles because, when leaving hotels in the morning, the luggage is often called for before toilet articles can be packed. It can be useful to pack an extra shirt and change of underwear in your flight bag in the unexpected event that for some reason your suitcase is misrouted.

A golf bag should be contained in a secured bag rather than a hard carry case (hard carry cases can be a problem in terms of the space in a rental car or mini bus). It is much safer for your golf equipment if you put a belt (canvas, plastic or leather) around the middle of the golf bag to keep the handle in its proper position. Bag covers are easily torn and clubs damaged when the bag handlers can't find the grip and carry (or toss) the bag by the cover. We would recommend that you lock the zipper on the bag cover.

## **GENERAL NEED TO KNOW**

### **Customs**

Check at the airport your duty free allowances for Europe. On your return you can bring up to \$400 worth of duty and tax free purchases. Purchases up to \$1,000 over your exemption will be assessed at a flat rate of 10%. Also unsolicited gifts with a limit of \$50 may be sent, duty free, to the U.S. – no more than one to the same address, and none to your home address.

Travelers entering Spain may bring in a series of personal items (such as personal jewelry, still and movie cameras, musical instruments, portable video and sound equipment, athletic gear, etc) without having to pay customs charges.

Upon request, Spanish customs officials will issue receipts to justify the entry into the country of any item.

For certain articles, such as cigarettes, cigars, perfume, wines and liquor, maximum limits have been established, with customs duties leviable on amounts exceeding these limits.

There is no limit to the amount of euros (Bank of Spain notes) tourists may bring into Spain. Also permitted is the entry of cheques or vouchers issued against foreign accounts in convertible euros, as are traveler's cheques, with no limits. Likewise, there is no limit on the amount of foreign currency which may be brought into Spain, whether in the form of banknotes or coin, always provided that same is legal tender.

### **Check In**

You should check in for your international flight at least 2 hours before departure.

### **Departures (Escorted Tours)**

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We have to depart from hotels, airports, clubs **ON TIME**. For example, if departure is set for 9.00 am, please be on the bus ready to drive out at 9.00 am, and not in your room ready to come down at that time. It is vital we all make sure we get off on time.

### **Notices (Escorted Tours)**

Information that we have to get to you will be written out on a sheet and put in your hotel keybox, so make it a rule to check with the concierge for any messages. We will also go over the event of the day, a review of the golf course etc, during our motorcoach transfer to the course.

### **Currency Exchange**

The Spanish currency is the Euro. The best place to change money is in the bank. These are open:-

Monday – Friday:	10.00 hrs – 13.00 hrs
Saturday:	closed
Sunday:	closed

If you need money outside these hours, you can obtain it from many travel agents or in the hotel. Be sure, however, to check in advance the rate of exchange and commission charged, as this can be expensive. Most hotels, restaurants and shops also accept credit cards and traveler's cheques.

### **Telephone Calls**

Please note that telephone calls from your hotel room are charged at a higher rate than normal and can be expensive. Please check charges before calling especially long distance. Local calls in Europe are NOT free. Most of the US long distance carriers now have 0-800 numbers in Europe that connect directly to a US operator. You can then charge the call to your phone or credit card. *To get the 0-800 number contact your service prior to departure.* This is the most cost effective way to call home.

### **Value Added Tax**

VAT is a sales tax which is levied at a uniform rate of 7% on most goods and services a visitor buys. Some larger stores participate in a VAT refund scheme. When buying something, ask if the store operates this scheme. If a participant, you will get a form to fill out listing your goods and costs, you keep a copy of this with the address of the store on the form. After going through customs on your return you will post this back to the store, ie. before leaving Europe.

Please note: you should pack all VAT refund items in one bag in case customs asks to see them. The customs official at the airport will sign your form, then you post it back to the appropriate stores. Further details can be obtained from leaflet 701/1/85.

### **Tipping**

Tipping is a longstanding tradition in Spain. While practically all establishments currently include a surcharge for service it is still common to leave something of a tip. This custom, common in bars and restaurants, has extended to hotel porters and taxi drivers, though in none of these cases is it obligatory nor will anyone recriminate a client for not tipping. It is customary to leave a tip in the room for the chambermaid.

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### **Social Customs**

Perhaps because of the benign climate and the long hours of sunshine in Spain, Spaniards tend to get up later in the morning and stay out later at night than the rest of their European neighbors.

Shops and businesses are usually opened from 9 or 9.30 am to 1.30 pm and from 4.30 or 5 pm to 8 or 8.30 pm, though it has become more and more common for businesses to stay open through the “siesta” hours. Business establishments are usually closed for a day-and-a-half per week, most often Saturday afternoon and Sunday, while many shops close only on Sunday. In tourist areas, in summer, business hours are often extended to 10 or 11 pm with stores open 7 days a week.

Restaurant hours are quite varied, with the norm being from 1.30 to 3.30 pm for lunch and from 8.30 to 11 or 11.30 pm for dinner. In summer, these hours are extended, with many establishments offering continuous service and still others serving food into the small hours of the night. Bars are usually open all day and close late at night. In general, the nightlife in Spain is quite intense, and the bars and discotheques stay open long past midnight. In summer, they often stay open past 3 or 4 am. In big cities like Madrid and Barcelona, for example, there are many places that stay open until dawn, even in winter.

### **Average Temperatures:**

Months	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
C°	16	17	18	21	23	27
F	61	63	64	70	73	80

Months	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
C°	29	29	27	23	19	17
F	84	84	80	73	66	63

### **Driving**

You will see many signs along the CN340 Costa de Sol road saying ‘Campo de golf’ : do not automatically think that these will take you to the course you are looking for. Please use our guidelines and look out for the relevant exit number.

‘Cambio de sentido’ → gives you notice that there is a junction coming up at which you can change direction.

- When traveling from Málaga to Marbella, ensure you follow the signs for N340.
- When traveling from Málaga to Sotogrande region follow signs for N340 until you come to the junction for the toll road E17 which cuts out a lot of time to reach the other end of the coast – but is not as scenic as the CN340.
- **GAS** – make sure that you use the right type. Most hire cars use **‘95’ UNLEADED** – ‘Sin Plomo’.

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## **TRADITIONAL FIESTAS**

The wealth and historical longevity of Spanish cultural traditions, together with the many different cultural influences and the variety of regions, are responsible for the beauty and originality of the fiestas held each year in the towns and villages of Spain. Over 200 have been classified as «of interest to tourists» while others have gained international fame. In February, carnival celebrations, akin to «mardi gras», are held all over the country. The most interesting are those in Cádiz and Tenerife, where music, humor and the local colour are enjoyed with such great intensity that every facet of the cities is affected. March is the month of the Fallas in Valencia, when the city is invaded by immense paper mache sculptures, frequently humorous satires of personalities in the news, that are set ablaze on the 19<sup>th</sup>, the feast day of San José, much to the delight of revelers.

Holy Week, or Semana Santa (Easter Week), is celebrated in the spring with religious processions of great beauty and tradition.

The Seville Spring Fair, or Feria de Sevilla, is held in April. The fairgrounds, which are set up each year, become a small version of Seville with a life of its own. In the different pavilions, drinking, singing and dancing go on around the clock. In May, the «Rocio» is held. This is a traditional Andalusian procession on horseback or in wagons to the Hermitage of the Virgin of the Rocio in Almonte, near the Doñana National Park in the province of Huelva.

In Pamplona, from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> of July, is the famous «Sanfermines», or running of the bulls, when those who dare risk their lives go racing through the streets of the city with the charging beasts at their heels.

## **BASIC GUIDE TO BULLFIGHTING**

The season starts in March and runs until the middle of October. Bullfights take place on Sunday afternoons in most major cities and in almost every town during local fairs and festivals.

The regulations on bullfighting define in exacting detail the structure and procedure of a bullfight in Spain.

- Six bulls are selected and allocated in pairs to three individual matadors (bullfighters).
- The impresario contracts matadors who engage in turn their own assistants. They dress in trajes de luces (suits of lights) in hotels of the town during the day of the corrida (bullfight).
- The bullfight begins in late afternoon which is why there are different prices for seats in or out of the sun.
- Each matador and his team walk out together in ordered procession across the arena adding pomp and ceremony.
- The president of the bullfight signals for the first bull to be released whereupon the fanfare of trumpets from the brass band also ends the pasodoble (popular two beat dance music).

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- The first bull is engaged by the first bullfighter's team of assistants with large purple capes to see how it moves in the Plaza de Toro's (bullring).
- In the next section, the president signals the entry of two picadors (lancers on horseback), one of whom is to pierce the bull's neck in a limited way.
- Then the first of three banderilleros (usually older bullfighters who form part of the matador's team) individually run towards the bull making him charge. Their job is to insert two banderillas (decorated wooden sticks with spiked ends) over the horns into the bull's neck muscle.
- In the final section, the torero (star matador) engages the bull with his elegance and control, he exchanges the purple and yellow capote (large cape) for the red muleta (smaller cape) and curved sword. He might dedicate the bull to an individual or the audience.
- If he performs well and the bull is killed cleanly, the audience will wave white handkerchiefs to try to oblige the president to award an ear or two ears and tail to him.
- If a matador is injured and has to leave the ring to be attended by his surgeon or to hospital, then the remaining matadors must kill the bull.
- The bull's carcass is quickly removed, pulled out of the arena by harnessed horses and then distributed for sale in butchers' shops or local markets.
- When the sixth and last bull is dead, the matadors and their teams cross the arena and return to their hotels to change. The newspapers may report with photos in the next day's edition.

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# DO'S AND DON'TS IN SPAIN

- **DO TAKE CARE OF YOUR BELONGINGS AT ALL TIMES.** Street crime is a serious problem in some of the tourist areas and major cities. Pick-pocketing and handbag snatching are common. Avoid carrying too much money or wearing conspicuous jewelry and leave your tickets and passports in a safe place (e.g., in the hotel safe).
- **HIRING A MOPED OR OTHER VEHICLE?**
- **DO** check beforehand is it road worthy? Is there proper insurance coverage and does it cover injury to third parties\*?
- **DO** wear a helmet when on a moped or motorcycle and drive carefully. Driving habits are different to those in the U.S.
- **DON'T GET INVOLVED WITH DRUGS.** Penalties are severe – sentences can be up to 12 years for trafficking, and up to 2 years can be spent in prison on remand before trial.
- **DO BRING ENOUGH FUNDS** with you for your stay and your return. Bank transfers can take time and if you miss your charter flight, you may need to buy another ticket.
- **DO RESPECT SPANISH CUSTOMS REGULATIONS.**
- **DO RESPECT SPANISH LAWS.** Arrest for drunken and violent behavior can lead to prison sentences and the U.S. Consulates cannot obtain your release.
- **DO BE CAUTIOUS OF EXPOSURE TO THE SUN.** Too much sun especially if mixed with alcohol, can result in dehydration and lead to serious health problems\*.

**\*NOTE:** *Separate health insurance can give you a choice of Doctors/Clinics and provides for medical repatriation to the U.S. in the event of a serious accident. Health care is available to you in Spain but only in state hospitals not private hospitals. We recommend that before leaving the U.S. you should take out private medical insurance (or check to see if your own policy is good in Spain).*

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# USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

**USA Consulate** 95 247 48 91  
Av. Juan Gomez 8,  
Ed. Lucia No.1C  
Fuengirola

Malaga airport 95 204 88 04  
Malaga Tourist Office 95 221 34 45  
Taxi Service 95 232 79 50  
Marbella Bus Station 95 277 21 92  
Costa del Sol hospital 95 286 27 48  
Municipal Police 95 282 22 49  
Taxi Service 95 277 44 88  
Tourist Office 95 277 14 42

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